

James Alexander Hamilton to Andrew Jackson, December 9, 1833, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

COLONEL JAMES A. HAMILTON TO JACKSON.

Confidential.

Philadelphia, December 9, 1833.

My dear Sir, I have this moment completed a very hasty perusal of Mr. Biddles Bank report and beg leave to refer to two circumstances of which I am reminded by it. It commences by stating that shortly after your accession it was distinctly revealed that other duties than those to the Country were required of the Bank etc. and that "It is understood that soon after that event a meeting was held in Washington of *the principal Chiefs* to consider the means of perpetuating, their new authority *and the possession of the Bank was the most prominent object of the Parties assembled*" and that the Bank distinctly announced its determination not to belong to any party or to participate in Political contentions. in other words the Principal chiefs were defeated in their most prominent object.

In the first place I venture to assert that no such meeting was held. If it had I altho not a Chief was so circumstanced there as that I must have known it. And that no such object was entertained is evident from the fact that after the pretended defeat of the chiefs, when that part of your first message which refers to the Bank was under discussion *every member of your cabinet* was of opinion that the subject should be omitted altogether, as were many of your friends out of the Cabinet. This I well recollect, my opinion coincided with yours and I heard those of every member. It is not probable that if these chiefs had been defeated in their most prominent object and knowing from the course of the Bank in

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the case to which it refers that that institution was adverse to them that they would have wished you to withhold the expression of your views, views you entertained as long [as] I have had the pleasure to know you and which you expressed when I first saw you at your Home in Nashville.

As to Mr. Gallatin's Book on Banking¹ I have been informed by a Gentleman in whom I have perfect confidence that this Book was written by Mr. G. under an understanding that he was to be rewarded for it, by the Presidency of the N.Y. Branch and that when Mr. Biddle found that arrangement could not be made He offered to pay Mr. G. one thousand

¹ *Considerations on the Currency and Banking System of the United States* (1831).

Gallatin was at this time, and until 1839, president of the National Bank of New York.

dollars for his Labour. I communicate this last circumstance in confidence because my informant will not permit me to quote him and in order should there be an investigation that enquiries may be so directed as to Elicit this truth. The Report ought to be, I have no doubt will be and is susceptible of being shewn to be most uncandid and unsatisfactory.

with the truest attachment

[*Indorsement in Jackson's handwriting:*] Referred to Mr. Kendall for his perusal and notice of the falshood as stated of the meeting alledged within—return this letter as soon as perused and noted. A.J.